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CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT STUDY

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This report was prepared to further define programs and problems in the CBD. Needs were presented under six general sections and existing programs to meet the needs were discussed. Recommendations were made to further meet the needs. Recommendations were considered in relationship to each other to avoid a segregated approach. The most discussion and attention was given to parking because the planner felt this issue was the most important at the time.

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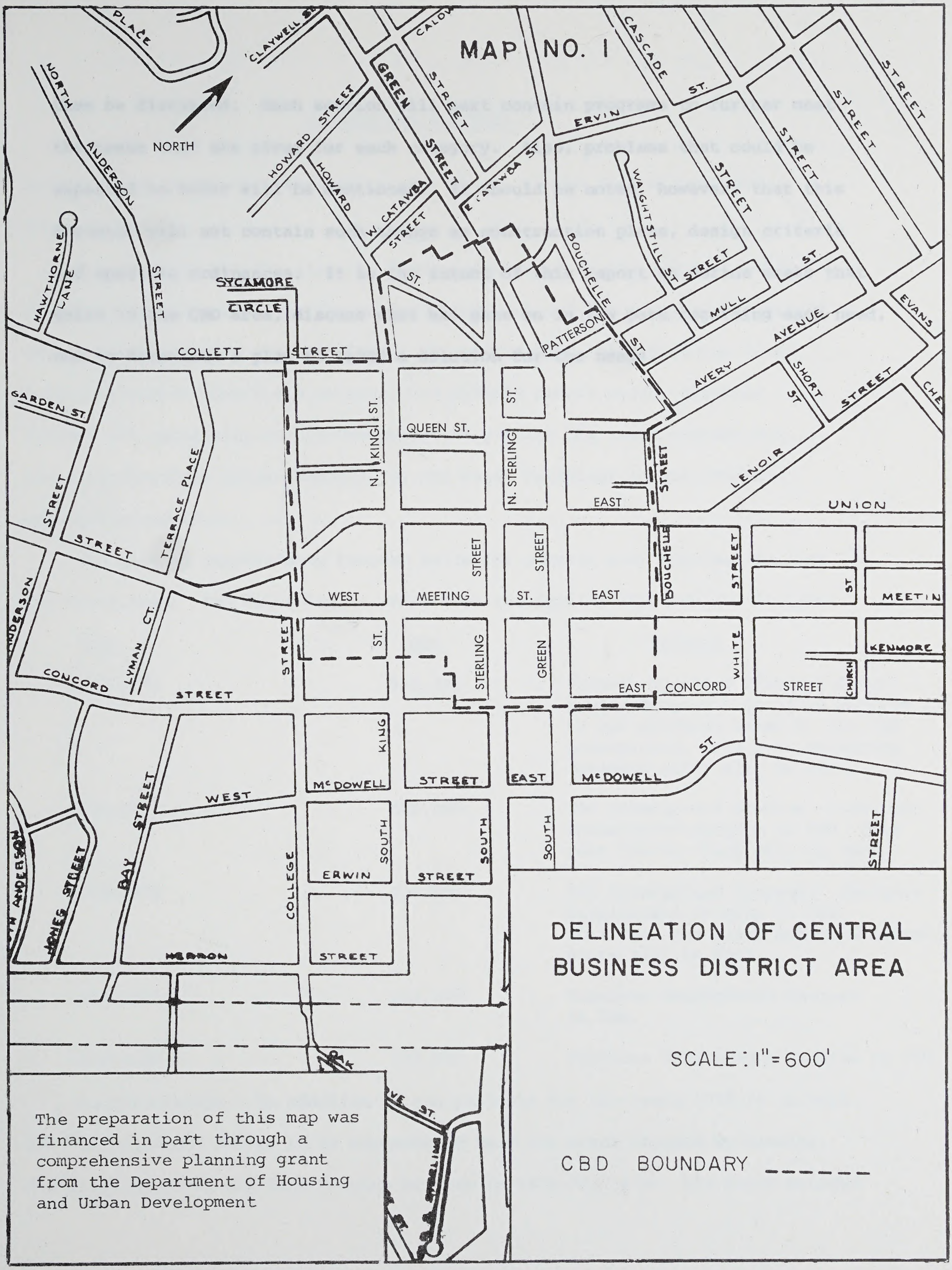
INTRODUCTION

The following report will review needs in the Central Business District (CBD) as determined from analyzing various planning documents and studies and discussing needs with the Planning and Zoning Commission, Downtown Revitalization Committee, and the Community Appearance Advisory Commission. Programs and projects existing or now under way will be reviewed and recommendations for meeting at least some of the needs will be made. The CBD is defined as the area encompassed by CB-A and CB-B on the Morganton Zoning Map (Please see Map No. 1).

Several planning documents exist or are in the final stages of completion that address, at least in part, the CBD. These documents include the Community Development Program, Community Appearance Program, Community Facilities Plan, Major Thoroughfare Plan, and the Capital Improvements Program. Also, many programs are under way in the CBD, such as the tree planting project, mini-parks or garden development, a trial period of free two-hour parking, and an underground electric program. The CBD is a homogeneous area with many of the same programs and problems existing throughout. Also, it is a very valuable area to the city in terms of investments and taxes and a concentration of land uses for shopping, banking, office establishments, employment, etc. From the above, it can readily be seen that a segregated approach to the planning of projects should not occur. One comprehensive report should be prepared for the CBD that will correlate each project in relationship to the whole program.

The report is broken down into six basic parts or sections. These sections include underground electric, mini-parks, tree planting, traffic, parking, and other aesthetic considerations. A general need will be listed within each section. Present programs and projects and existing plans to meet the need will


MAP NO. 1
NORTH
PLACE
CLAYWELL ST.
NORTH ANDERSON
HOWARD STREET
GREEN STREET
STREET
CASCADE ST.
ERVIN
STREET
STREET
STREET
HOWARD
W CATAWBA STREET
E CATAWBA ST
WAIGHT STILL ST
STREET
STREET
ST
BOUCHELLE
PATTERSON
HAWTHORNE LANE
STREET
SYCAMORE
CIRCLE
COLLETT STREET
ST.
MULL
ST
AVENUE
EVANS
AVERY
SHORT ST
STREET
GARDEN ST
N. KING ST.
QUEEN ST.
ST.
N. STERLING
LENOIR
STREET
EAST
UNION
STREET
TERRACE PLACE
STREET
WEST
MEETING STREET
ST.
STREET
EAST
BOUCHELLE
STREET
ST
MEETIN
LYMAN CT.
STREET
ST.
STERLING
GREEN
EAST CONCORD
WHITE
STREET
CHURCH
KENMORE
CONCORD STREET
KING
McDOWELL
STREET
EAST
McDOWELL ST.
WEST
BOY STREET
SOUTH
SOUTH
SOUTH
STREET
COLLEGE
ERWIN
STREET
HERRON
STREET
DELINEATION OF CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AREA
SCALE: 1"=600'
CBD BOUNDARY ------
The preparation of this map was financed in part through a comprehensive planning grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development

then be discussed. Each section will next contain programs to further meet the needs that are given for each category. Also, problems that could be expected to occur will be mentioned. It should be noted, however, that this document will not contain such things as construction plans, design criteria and specific ordinances. It is the intent of this report to define needs that exist in the CBD area, discuss what has gone on in the past regarding each need, and to formulate a plan to reach a solution for the needs.

UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC

Need - Remove overhead electrical lines, etc.., in the central business district area.

A program to put the electric lines underground in the CBD area began in 1970. In 1970 the lines in the alley behind Belk and Woolworth's were placed underground. In 1974 the transformer for the parking lot behind the First United Methodist Church was bought. The 1974-75 annual budget contains $10,000 for installing this transformer and putting the lines underground. Also, it should be noted that most of the newer buildings in the CBD have underground service.

The Capital Improvements Program calls for a multi-year approach to meet the above need. The following is taken from the Capital Improvements Program:

Year	Cost	Project
1975-1976	$15,000	Central Business District Underground Program - Continue program to put electric lines in the CBD underground. This year Morganton Hardware alley will be done.
1976-1977	$20,000	CBD Underground Program - Continue underground program in CBD. This year Kibler alley will be done.
1977-1978	$25,000	CBD Underground Program - Continue Underground Program in CBD. This year the alley behind Goodyear store will be done.
1978-1979	$25,000	Continue Underground Program in CBD.
1979-1980	$25,000	Continue Underground Program in CBD

Recommendation - In addition to the projects for the years 1975-76 through 1977-78 mentioned above, it is recommended that the block bounded by Meeting, Sterling, Concord, and King Streets be done in 1978-79. Also, the block bounded

Year	Cost	Project
1982-1983	$52'000	Construct underground project in CBD
1983-1984	$52'000	Construct underground project in CBD.
1984-1985	$52'000	CBD underground project - construct underground project in CBD. Date have not been selected yet but will be done before 1990.
1985-1986	$50'000	CBD underground project - construct underground project in CBD. Date have not been selected yet but will be done before 1990.
1986-1987	$15'000	General maintenance project under- ground project - construct project to put electric lines in the CBD underground. Date have not been selected yet but will be done before 1990.

The capital improvements program calls for a multi-year approach to meet underground service.

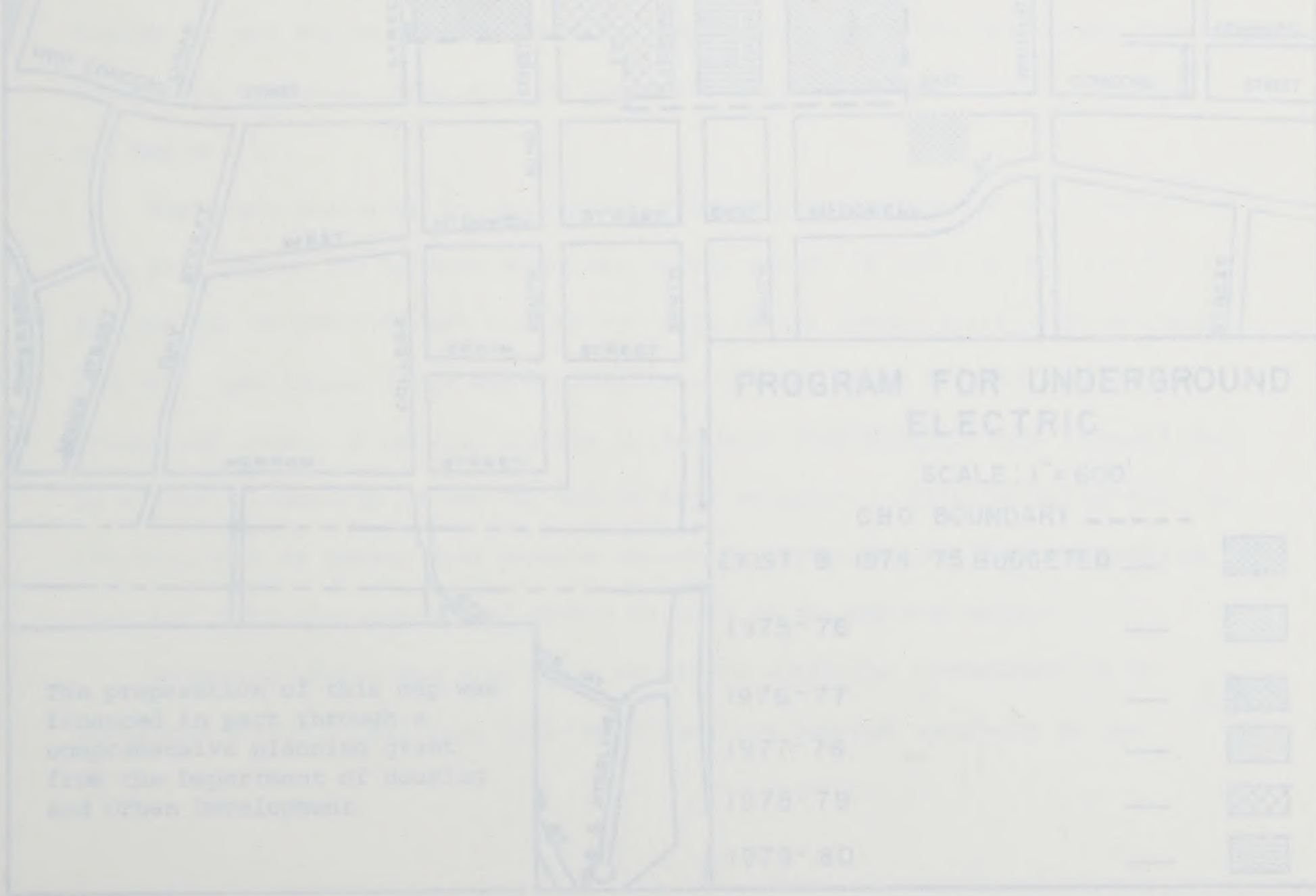
Also, it should be noted that most of the newer buildings in the CBD have $10,000 for installation into transformer and burried the lines underground. In 1984 the transformer for the building for placing the first underground project in CBD. The 1983-87 amount budget Control was pooled. The 1983-87 amount budget construct

A problem to put the electric lines underground in the CBD were needed in order to put the electric lines in the alley behind Belk and Woolworth's were placed on 1990. In 1990 the lines in the alley behind Belk and Woolworth's were placed

Need - Remove overhead electrical lines, etc.'' in the central business district area.

by Meeting, Sterling, Concord and Green Streets and the remainder of the block bounded by Bouchelle, Union, Sterling, and Avery Streets should be done in 1979-80. This would leave only three areas without underground electric service (Please see Map No. 2).

It should be noted that the above program should be kept flexible due to the problem of obtaining land for pad placement. Priorities may be changed and projects may not occur within each specified year for this reason. Also, it should be noted that this plan only calls for underground wiring in alleys and parking lots. It is further recommended that before completion of the above program, a plan be developed to place all electric and telephone lines along the streets underground. Cooperation with the telephone company and downtown merchants and businessmen would be essential for a complete underground program.


PROGRAM FOR UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC
SCALE: 1" = 600'
CBD BOUNDARY
EXIST. & 1974-75 BUDGETED
1975-76
1976-77
1977-78
1978-79
1979-80
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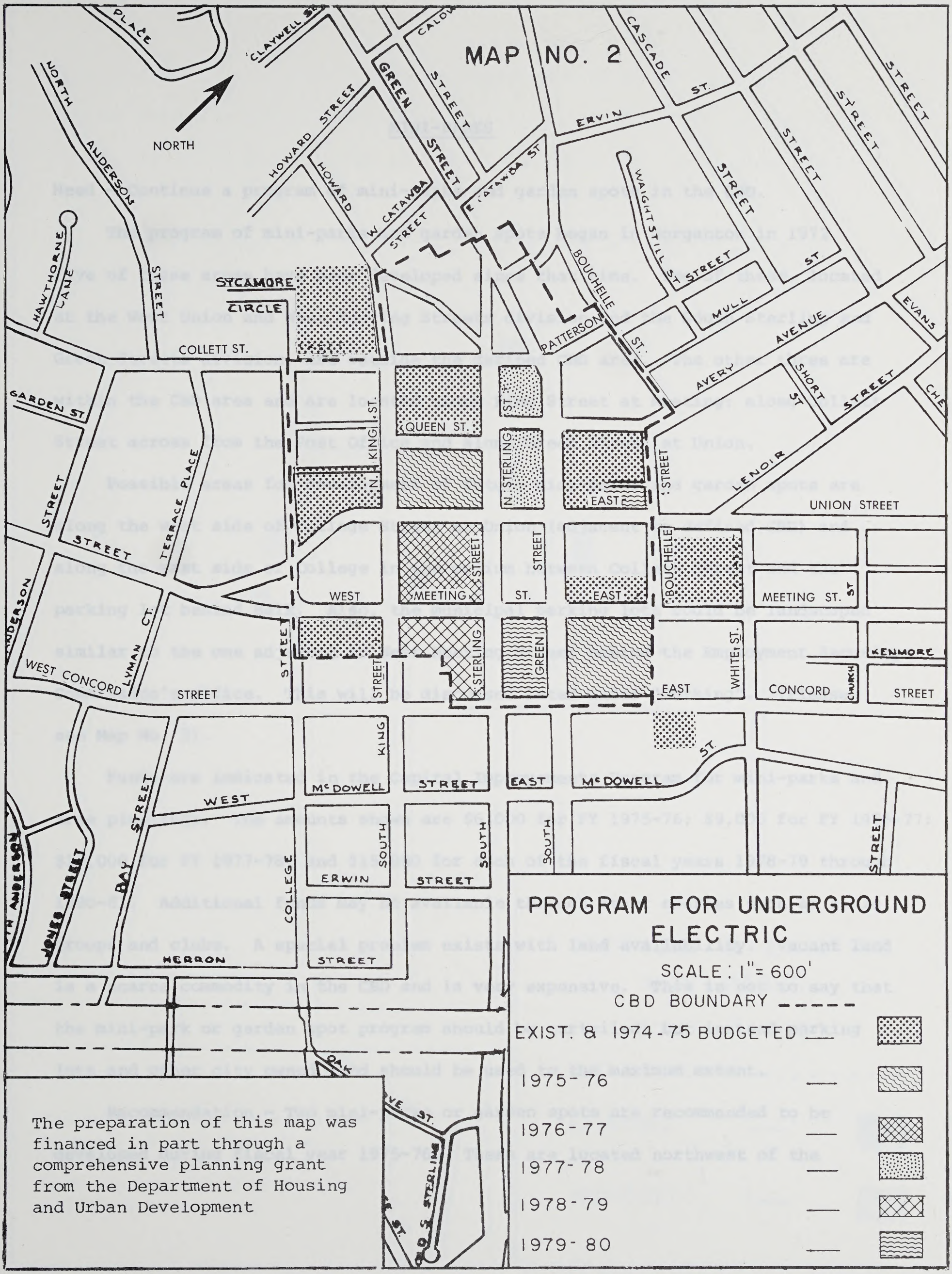
MAP NO. 2



PROGRAM FOR UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC

SCALE: 1" = 600'

CBD BOUNDARY - - - - -

EXIST. & 1974-75 BUDGETED	
1975-76	
1976-77	
1977-78	
1978-79	
1979-80	

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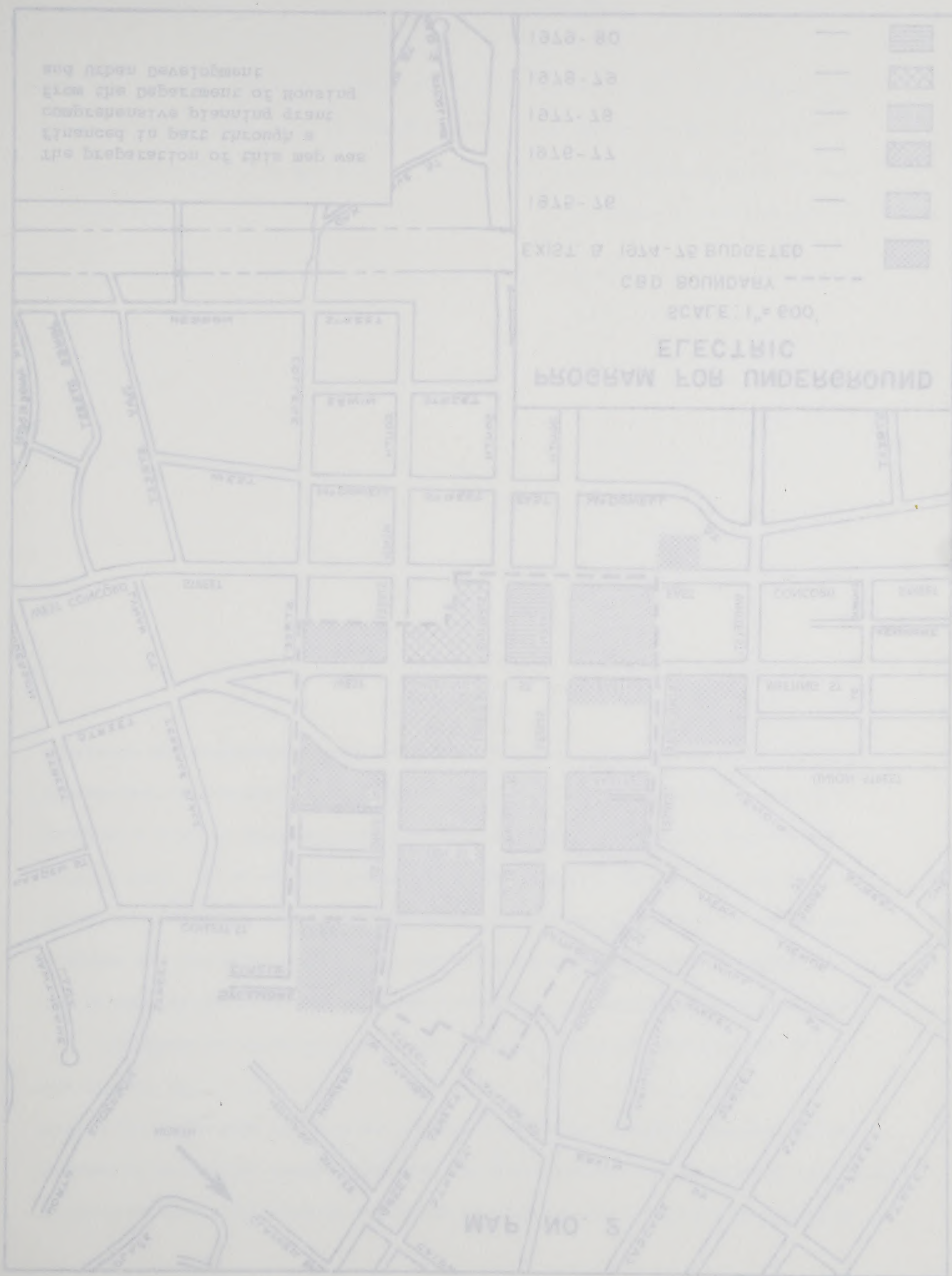

MINI-PARKS

Need - Continue a program of mini-parks and garden spots in the CBD.

The program of mini-parks and garden spots began in Morganton in 1972. Five of these areas have been developed since that time. Two of these, located at the West Union and West Meeting Streets division and the South Sterling and Green Streets division, are outside the defined CBD area. The other three are within the CBD area and are located along King Street at Meeting; along Collett Street across from the Post Office and along Green Street at Union.

Possible areas for development of future mini-parks and garden spots are along the west side of College Street at Union (adjacent to defined CBD) and along the east side of College in the medium between Collett Street and the parking lot behind Belk. Also, the municipal parking lots could be landscaped similar to the one adjacent to West Meeting Street behind the Employment Security Commission's Office. This will be discussed later under "Parking". (Please see Map No. 3).

Funds are indicated in the Capital Improvements Program for mini-parks and tree plantings. The amounts shown are $6,000 for FY 1975-76; $9,000 for FY 1976-77; $10,000 for FY 1977-78; and $15,000 for each of the fiscal years 1978-79 through 1980-81. Additional funds may be available through other sources such as civic groups and clubs. A special problem exists with land availability. Vacant land is a scarce commodity in the CBD and is very expensive. This is not to say that the mini-park or garden spot program should be curtailed; but instead parking lots and other city owned land should be used to the maximum extent.

Recommendation - Two mini-parks or garden spots are recommended to be developed during fiscal year 1975-76. These are located northwest of the

MAP NO. 3

NORTH

PLACE
CLAYWELL ST.
NORTH ANDERSON STREET
HOWARD STREET
GREEN STREET
CASCADE ST.
ERVIN STREET
HAWTHORNE LANE
SYCAMORE CIRCLE
COLLETT STREET
W. CATAWBA STREET
E. CATAWBA ST.
WAIGHTSTILL ST.
BOUCHELLE ST.
PATTERSON AVENUE
MULL STREET
EVANS ST.
AVERY STREET
SHORT STREET
LENOIR STREET
UNION
GARDEN ST.
TERRACE PLACE
N. KING ST.
QUEEN ST.
N. STERLING ST.
EAST
WEST
MEETING STREET
LYMAN CT.
CONCORD STREET
STERLING ST.
GREEN ST.
WHITE ST.
KENMORE STREET
CHURCH ST.
McDOWELL STREET
KING ST.
SOUTH STREET
BAY STREET
COLLEGE STREET
ERWIN STREET
HERRON STREET
OAK AVE. ST.

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PROPOSED & EXISTING MINI-PARKS

SCALE: 1" = 600'

CBD BOUNDARY

EXISTING

PROPOSED

PROPOSED & EXISTING MINI-PARKS

SCALE: 1" = 600'

CBD BOUNDARY

EXISTING

PROPOSED

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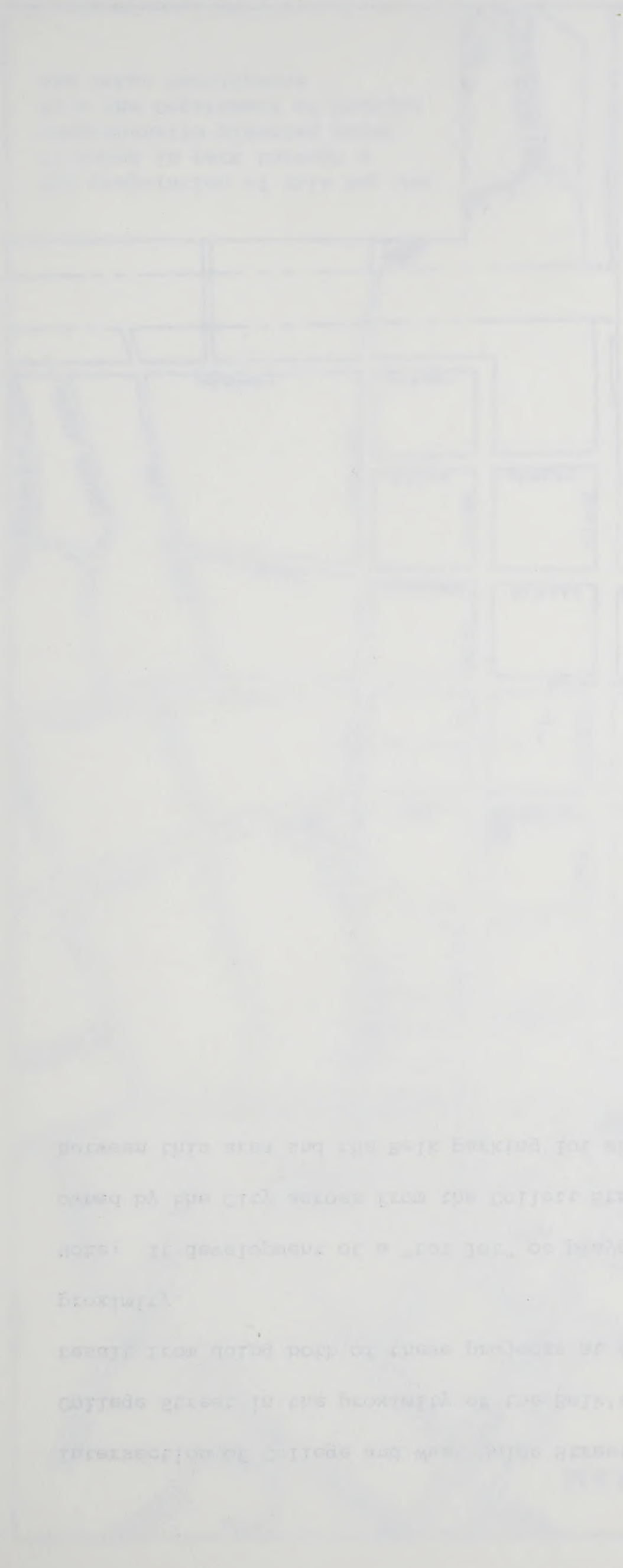
MAP NO. 2

intersection of College and West Union Streets and along the east side of College Street in the proximity of the Belk's parking lot. Some saving should result from doing both of these projects at the same time due to their close proximity.

Note: If development of a "tot lot" or playground occurs on the two lots owned by the City across from the Collett Street Recreation Center, landscaping between this area and the Belk parking lot should be considered.



TREE PLANTINGS

Need - Establish a program of tree plantings in the CBD.

On February 17, 1975, the Downtown Revitalization Committee and the Community Appearance Advisory Commission met in a joint session and recommended approval of a tree planting program to the Morganton City Council. At the Council meeting on March 3, 1975, the tree planting program was given unanimous approval. The program calls for planting approximately 95 trees in the CBD. The trees will be planted in either (1) 36" x 36" areas within the sidewalk or (2) within grass medians.

In the 36" x 36" areas a dwarf evergreen variety tree was suggested. In the medians, suggested trees include dogwoods, evergreens and blooming cherry trees. It is strongly suggested that trees be replaced as required to avoid problems with obstructing vision of vehicular traffic. These replaced trees could be planted in other areas of the city where vision problems would not result.

The locations presently proposed for plantings are along Green Street from Beach to Patterson Street, Sterling Street from Erwin to Collett Street, and Union Street from Green to King Street.

The estimated total cost for each tree planting is $30. This is $10 for labor, $15 for each tree, and $5 for other materials such as brick and mulch. An effort is now underway to encourage persons and businesses to "buy a tree". Also, $800 has been set aside by the Garden Club to help finance the program.

Recommendation - Trees that are planted during FY 1974-75 should be replaced as needed to avoid problems with obstructing vision of vehicular traffic.

As already mentioned, this will prevent vision obstruction of vehicular traffic in the downtown area. It is further recommended that the streets of Meeting, Queen, and Concord be reviewed for possible tree planting projects. Any future plantings should be consistent with the types of trees and planting methods used during the first project.

TRAFFIC

Need - Improve the traffic pattern in the CBD to include pedestrian and vehicular separation and safety.

Several events have taken place to help the downtown traffic situation. In the 1950's Fleming Drive was opened to serve as a by-pass around the city. In the early 1960's I-40 was opened around Morganton, which also contributed to the alleviation of downtown traffic congestion. The revised Thoroughfare Plan of 1961 recommended a one-way street system in the Morganton downtown area. This one way system was implemented in 1965, which made Green Street northbound; Sterling Street, southbound; Meeting Street, eastbound; and Union Street, westbound.

Another step to improve the traffic pattern in the CBD is the loop system of streets. This loop consists of Bouchelle Street on the east, Concord Street on the south, College Street on the west, and Collett Street on the north.

Great strides have been made in implementing the loop system. College Street is four-laned from Collett to West Meeting, and Collett Street is four-laned from near College to Green. Concord and the built section of Bouchelle are two-laned. The Capital Improvements Program indicates right-of-way acquisition and construction of a four-and five-laned facility on Bouchelle Street between Concord and Patterson with development staged over several years. When the development of Bouchelle Street is complete, any congestion of north-south traffic in the CBD should be substantially reduced.

Another area that needs discussing is TOPICS. The TOPICS program is dated September 1974 and reviews and makes recommendations for the Morganton area. The program devotes much attention to the CBD area. This study is quite detailed

and extensive and will not be elaborated on. Please refer to the TOPICS report dated September 1974.

Pedestrian traffic is also discussed in the Capital Improvements Program. The present proposal calls for $22,500 in FY 1975-76; $25,000 in FY 1976-77; and $35,000 in FY 1977-78 to upgrade sidewalks, curbs and gutters, especially in the central business district and perimeter area.

Recommendation - Proceed with the Capital Improvements Program of upgrading of sidewalks, curbs and gutters. Proceed with implementation of the Capital Improvements Program for Bouchelle Street and implement the TOPICS report in the CBD.

PARKING

Need - Provide adequate and aesthetically pleasing parking facilities in the CBD.

It is obvious to anyone viewing the CBD area that Morganton is fortunate to have a good supply of both off-street and on-street parking spaces. Within the study area there are 580 spaces in the municipal lots and 356 regulated on-street spaces. This gives a total of 936 parking spaces provided by the city and does not include private lots. The good supply of parking is a result of an active program to purchase and lease land for parking and a good zoning ordinance.

The zoning ordinance contains specific requirements for parking in the CBD. (Pages 47-49 of the Morganton Zoning Ordinance are included in Appendix I.) The requirements for parking in the CB-A zone are less stringent than in any other zoning district. CB-B zone parking requirements are the same as in the remainder of the zoning districts.

Research was done to determine if the Morganton Zoning Ordinance requirements are consistent with standards in other cities. In a study by the Eno Foundation in 1972, the recommended minimum standards are similar to those used in Morganton. On pages 86 and 87 of the book entitled "Zoning, Parking, and Traffic", one parking space for each 300 square feet of gross floor area is recommended for office buildings, banks, businesses and professional offices.

Another study, "Parking in the Center City" by Wilber Smith and Associates, dated May, 1965 reviewed zoning requirements, parking space needs, and planning standards on page 65. Although not given in this form, the parking standards, translated to the same format as the Morganton Zoning Ordinance, would give the following table:

Table I

Square Footage for One Parking Space

Land Use	Zoning	Parking Space Needs	Planning Standards
Commercial	333-666	125-666	125-500
Office	Variable	250-379	200-500

As can be seen from the above table, the requirements of 1 space for each 200 square feet of floor area in CB-A and 1 space for each 300 square feet of floor area in CB-B found in the Morganton Zoning Ordinance are within the ranges of the parking space needs and planning standards given above. It should be noted that both standards point out that parking requirements are based in part on users of mass transit and municipal spaces and lots.

Also, cities in North Carolina with populations between 15,000 and 20,000 were contacted. The seven cities of Concord, Lenoir, Lumberton, Thomasville, Eden, Lexington, and Shelby are within this population range and were asked how they treat parking in the CBD. Six of the cities have no off-street parking requirements in their zoning ordinances. The other city, Thomasville, has a framework to develop a comprehensive CBD plan and require parking as needed.

A study of the Morganton parking facilities was made in the afternoon of March 21, 1975. This day was chosen because it was a Friday; the weather was sunny, the temperature was in the 70's, and it was nine days before Easter. Close to maximum utilization of the parking facilities should have occurred on this day. The following tables review the result of the study:

Table II

Parking Lots, Spaces and Vacancies - March 21, 1975

Location	Total Spaces	Vacant Spaces
Caldwell lot	133	77
Meeting lot	56	2
Kibler lot	70	0
Queen lot	56	9
King lot	14	0
Belk lot	220	49
Collett lot	31	15
Total	580	152

Table III

On Street Parking, Spaces and Vacancies - March 21, 1975

Location	Total Spaces	Vacant Spaces
South Sterling (Union to Meeting)	33	1
South Sterling (Meeting to Concord)	34	20
North Green (Union to Avery)	33	9
North Green (Avery to Study Boundary)	27	3
North Sterling (Study Boundary to Collett)	10	5
North Sterling (Collett to Queen)	27	5
North Sterling (Queen to Union	30	0
Queen	23	4
South Green (Concord to Meeting)	31	17
South Green (Meeting to Union)	33	7
East Union (Bouchelle to Green)	27	17
East Union (Green to Sterling)	8	2
West Union (King to College)	9	3
King (Queen to Collett)	26	1
King (Meeting to Study Boundary)	6	2
Total	357	96

As can be seen from the above tables, 248 of the 937 total parking spaces in the study area were vacant. Approximately 26% of the spaces in the lots and 27% of the spaces along the street were vacant. (Please see Map number 4 and 5 for location of vacant spaces.)

The least frequent location of vacancies occurs in the Kibler, Meeting and King lots. Within these three lots only 2 spaces of the 140 spaces were found vacant. Also along Queen Street and along Sterling Street between Meeting and Queen Street, only 5 of the 86 spaces were vacant.

Another aspect of parking concerns free two hour parking. Morganton has twelve minute, one hour, two hour, and ten hour parking meters. The Morganton City Council voted in December 1974 to temporarily allow for free two hour parking in spaces regulated by one hour and two hour meters on the street and to allow for free two hour parking in the spaces regulated by one hour and two hour meters in the Kibler, Queen, and King lots.

MAP NO. 4

NORTH

PLACE
CLAYWELL ST.
NORTH ANDERSON
HOWARD STREET
GREEN STREET
CASCADE ST.
ERVIN
STREET
HAWTHORNE LANE
SYCAMORE CIRCLE
COLLETT STREET
W CATAWBA STREET
E CATAWBA ST
WAIGHTSTILL ST
BOUCHELLE
PATTERSON
MULL
AVENUE
EVANS
AVERY
SHORT ST
LENOIR
UNION
GARDEN ST
TERRACE PLACE
BELK LOT
COLLETT LOT
15/31
QUEEN LOT 9/56
QUEEN ST.
49/220 N. KING ST.
0/14 KING LOT
N. STERLING ST.
EAST
KIBLER 0/70
2/56 MEETING
WEST
MEETING LOT
CALDWELL LOT 77/133
EAST
MEETING ST
LYMAN CT.
CONCORD STREET
STERLING ST.
GREEN
WHITE
KENMORE
CHURCH
CONCOR
KING
McDOWELL STREET
EAST
McDOWELL ST.
WEST
JONES STREET
BAY STREET
COLLEGE
ERWIN SOUTH STREET
SOUTH
HERRON
OAK
O & STERLING

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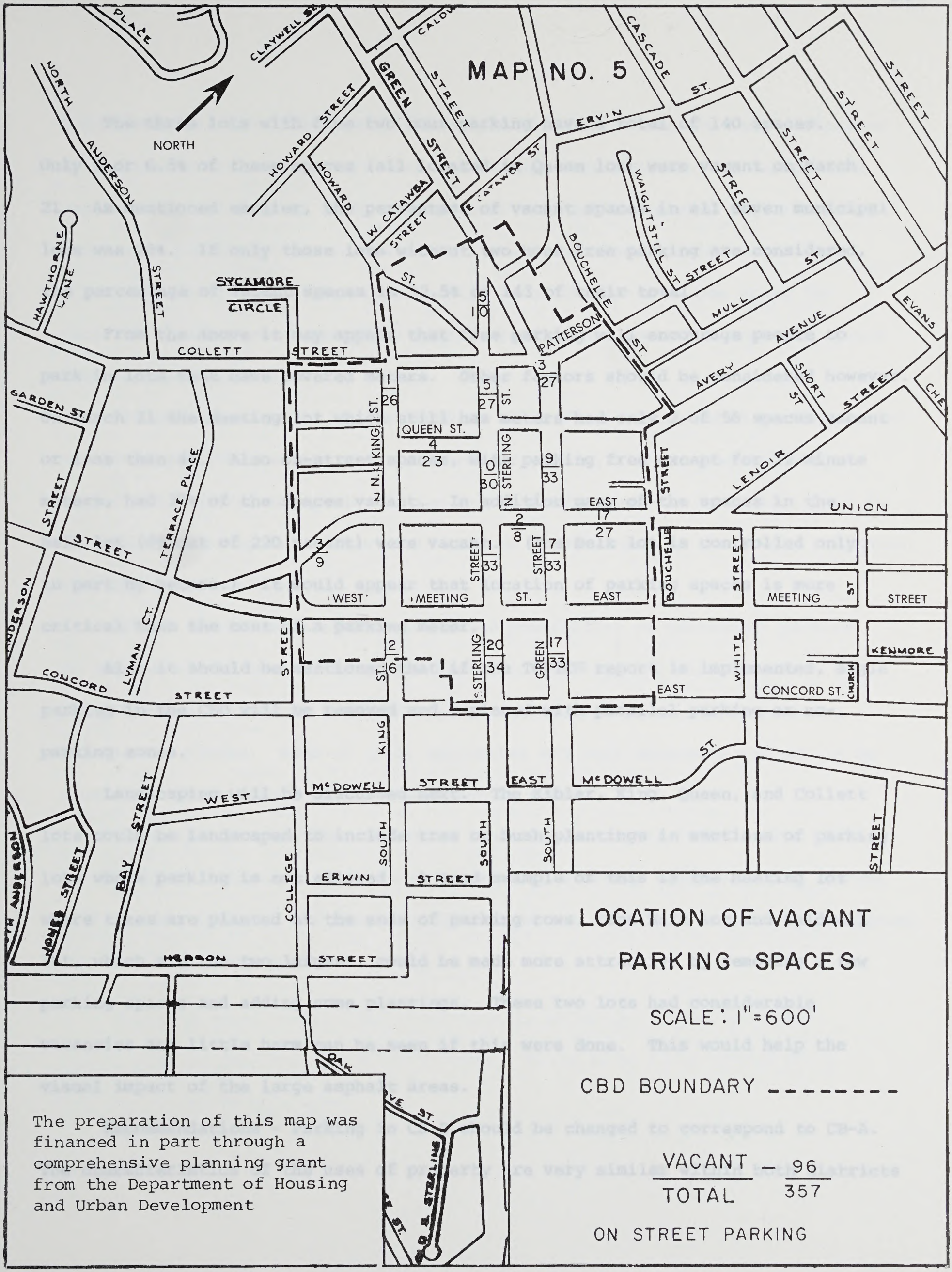
LOCATION OF VACANT PARKING SPACES

SCALE: 1"=600'

CBD BOUNDARY --------

VACANT / TOTAL — 152 / 580

PARKING LOTS



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LOCATION OF VACANT
PARKING SPACES

SCALE: 1"=800'

CBD BOUNDARY ----------

ON STREET PARKING

$\frac{\text{TOTAL}}{\text{VACANT}} - \frac{\text{257}}{\text{98}}$

MAP NO. 2

The three lots with free two hour parking have a total of 140 spaces. Only 9 or 6.5% of these spaces (all located in Queen lot) were vacant on March 21. As mentioned earlier, the percentage of vacant spaces in all seven municipal lots was 26%. If only those lots without two hour free parking are considered, the percentage of vacant spaces is 32.5% or 143 of their total.

From the above it may appear that free parking will encourage people to park in lots that have covered meters. Other factors should be considered however. On March 21 the Meeting lot which still has meters had only 2 of 56 spaces vacant or less than 4%. Also on-street spaces, with parking free except for 12 minute meters, had 27% of the spaces vacant. In addition many of the spaces in the Belk lot (49 out of 220 vacant) were vacant. (The Belk lot is controlled only in part by meters.) It would appear that location of parking spaces is more critical than the cost of a parking meter.

Also it should be mentioned that if the TOPICS report is implemented, angle parking in the CBD will be removed and replaced with parallel parking or no-parking zones.

Landscaping will be discussed next. The Kibler, King, Queen, and Collett lots could be landscaped to include tree or bush plantings in sections of parking lots where parking is not allowed. A good example of this is the Meeting lot where trees are planted at the ends of parking rows. The Belk lot and Caldwell lot, which are the two largest, could be made more attractive by removing a few parking spaces and adding some plantings. These two lots had considerable vacancies and little harm can be seen if this were done. This would help the visual impact of the large asphalt areas.

Recommendations - Parking in CB-B should be changed to correspond to CB-A. The characteristics of the uses of property are very similar within both districts

with commercial and office establishments dominating. Also the only difference in the zoning ordinance occurs with the parking requirements. By making CB-B requirements the same as CB-A, storage area will not be counted in determining parking, a percentage discount will be allowed for basement and second floor areas, and in most buildings parking will be on the basis of one space for each 300 square feet of net floor area instead of one space for each 200 square feet of gross floor area.

An ordinance should be developed to allow for a reduction of parking spaces not to exceed 10% when the area not used for parking will be planted or landscaped and when in the opinion of the Board of Adjustment no harm will occur in the reduction of spaces. This would need to be developed in the zoning ordinance as a special exception.

Steps should be taken to explore the possibility of additional parking in the two blocks bounded by Queen, Sterling, Meeting, and King Streets. Two possibilities are either land purchase or decking one of the three existing lots in the blocks. Both of these approaches are very expensive and should be studied in great detail before a decision is made.

Municipal parking lots should be landscaped. During 1976-77, the Kibler lot should be landscaped in conjunction with underground electric work. During 1977-78, the Caldwell lot should be landscaped and during 1978-79 the Queen Street lot should be landscaped.

OTHER AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS

Need - To improve appearance of the CBD.

Many of the projects discussed earlier such as the electric system, mini-parks and tree plantings will improve the appearance of the CBD. Other considerations that have been discussed when reviewing aesthetics with various individuals and community groups include a sign ordinance, a color coordinated comprehensive development scheme, an awning program, installation of benches, prohibiting sidewalk storage and collection of trash, and renovating the County Courthouse.

Signs are permitted in the CB-A and CB-B zoning areas wherein the zoning ordinance states, "outdoor advertising signs and structures" as a permitted use. The zoning ordinance has no other requirements such as maximum size and number or location of signs. The North Carolina Building Code does require signs in the CBD to have at least a nine foot clearance above the sidewalk and shall not extend above the roofline more than 2½ feet. Also, signs must be eighteen inches inside the curb line.

Presently, there is no comprehensive color coordinated pattern or canopy program in the CBD. Most buildings are painted and have awnings, but this is done separately for each commercial establishment.

Benches have been installed in certain areas of the CBD, such as the Caldwell Gardens on South Green Street and the mini-park beside the Employment Security Commission office on King Street.

Sidewalk trash storage and collection is occurring at the northwest intersection of Sterling and Union Streets. There is no alley behind North Sterling Street in this area.

A need identified by the Citizens Advisory Committee deals with the Burke County Courthouse. The CAC calls for a joint effort to renovate the Courthouse to be used as a museum and archives center. Also, it was suggested that the entire Courthouse Square be cleared and landscaped to become a central city park.

Recommendations - Signs - A sign ordinance should be developed in FY 1975-76 to include the maximum size of signs, the number of signs for each commercial establishment, the location of signs, the elimination of flashing or blinking signs, and possible elimination of free-standing signs. The sign ordinance could be developed as a joint effort by the City of Morganton staff, Downtown Revitalization Committee, the Community Appearance Advisory Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission. "701 Planning and Management" funds can possibly be used in the development of a sign ordinance.

Color coordinated pattern and canopy program - With the aid of a professional downtown consultant, a color coordinanted pattern and uniform canopy parogram should be developed for the CBD. The canopy program should be developed to prevent interference with the tree planting program now underway.

Benches - Benches could be installed along streets with wide sidewalks such as North Sterling and Union Streets and be aesthetically located within the tree plantings, awnings and color coordinated pattern.

Sidewalk storage and collection of trash - There is no recommendation made to alleviate this problem since there can be no practical solution determined at this time.

Burke County Courthouse - The Burke County Commissioners have decided to preserve the Burke County Courthouse and a committee has been appointed to coordinate the preservation effort. A recommendation is not made.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The CBD study will have little if any adverse environmental impact. Each section is discussed below with the anticipated negative and positive impact if the recommendations are implemented.

Underground Electric

Negative - Land disturbing and possible disruption of alleys and parking lots while construction is going on.

Positive - Better aesthetics and safer conditions from elimination of overhead wires and utility poles.

Mini-parks

Negative - None.

Positive - Better aesthetics of CBD.

Tree Plantings

Negative - Sight clearance problems could occur if trees are not removed as needed.

Positive - Better aesthetics of CBD.

Traffic

Negative - Disruption of traffic while improvements are being made.

Positive - Better traffic patterns and safer conditions.

Parking

Negative - Possible if decking of parking is done.

Positive - Landscaping will create better aesthetics.

Other

Negative - None, depending on what is done with county courthouse.

Positive - Better aesthetics of CBD.

CONCLUSION

A program for the Central Business District of Morganton, North Carolina was given in the foregoing study. The study was divided into six basic sections or parts including underground electric, mini-parks, tree plantings, traffic, parking, and other aesthetic considerations. Several planning documents were reviewed and three community groups were consulted in preparing the study. One general need for each section was formulated and the programs and projects now underway to accomplish this need were discussed. Recommendations were then made that would further accomplish the goal of meeting each need.

Special attention was given to the parking section because this appeared to be the most urgent problem. Other sections such as tree plantings and mini-parks were only briefly discussed because these projects are nearing completion.

The intent of this study was not to prepare specific ordinances or construction plans. Neither was the study intended to be the final step in the CBD area. Instead the purpose is to draw together the diverse needs of a common area, elaborate on these needs, and recommend solutions that will satisfy the needs in a coordinated plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Planning and Zoning Commission - On May 15, 1975 the Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Central Business District Study.

Community Appearance Advisory Commission - On May 19, 1975 the Community Appearance Advisory Commission unanimously recommended the implementation of the Central Business District Study to the Morganton City Council with the following addition:

Two traffic islands should be planted and this should be included within the section on "mini-parks". The two islands are located within the intersection of Queen Street and North Sterling Street and the intersection of North Sterling Street and North Green Street. Both of these planted island projects are within the 1975-76 budget request by the Commission.

Downtown Revitalization Committee - On May 20, 1975 the Downtown Revitalization Committee endorsed by consensus the Central Business District Study. The Committee reaffirmed several of the ideas and programs in the study including the beautification aspect, breaking the monotony of the Caldwell and Belk parking lots by removing a few spaces and planting green areas, tying in the children's play area development located beside the News Herald with the Belk parking lot for landscaping, and the "other asthetic considerations" section. Also the committee wished to study the parking requirements in the downtown area more fully.

TECHNICAL REPORTS CONSULTED

Report	Date	Author
Community Development Program	1974	Citizen's Advisory Committee
Community Appearance Program	1972	Traffic and Planning Associates
Community Facilities Plan	1973	Traffic and Planning Associates
Major Thoroughfare Plan	1975	North Carolina Dept. of Transportation
Capital Improvements Program	1975	Planning Commission
TOPICS	1974	Traffic and Planning Associates
Zoning, Parking, and Traffic	1972	Eno Foundation
Parking in the Center City	1965	Wilber Smith and Associates

parking space and the means of ingress and egress between such space and a street or alley. This information shall be in sufficient detail to enable the building inspector to determine whether or not the requirements of this section are met.

6. The certificate of occupancy of the use of any building, structure or land where off-street parking space is required shall be withheld by the building inspector until the provisions of this section are fully met. If at any time such compliance ceases, any certificate of occupancy which shall have been issued for the use of the property shall immediately become void and of no effect.

B. All Districts Except Central Business Zone-A.

1. Off-street parking space shall be provided and permanently maintained by the owners and occupants of the following type of property uses on the premises where the principle use is located in all districts except the Central Business Zone - A on the basis indicated:

1. Residence and apartments. One space for each dwelling unit.

2. Rooming houses, boardinghouses, and nurses' homes. One space for four rooms to be rented or occupied.

3. Motels and tourists' homes. One space for each room or unit to be rented.

4. Hotels. One space for each four rooms, plus additional space as required for related uses within the hotel.

5. Hospitals and nursing homes. One space for each four beds intended for patient use, exclusive of bassinets; plus one space for each three staff or visiting doctors and one space for each five employees on the largest work shift.

6. Medical Clinics and offices. Four spaces for each doctor practicing at the clinic, plus one space for each employee.

7. Auditoriums, theatres, stadiums and similar uses, involving the assembling of persons at scheduled times. One space for each four seats in such place of assembly.

8. Bus terminals. One space for each employee and one space for each bus loading ramp and track.

9. Other office, business, service, and commercial uses. One space for each two hundred square feet of gross floor area.

10. Industrial, warehousing, and wholesaling uses. One space for each vehicle used directly in the conduct of such use, and, in addition, one space for each four employees of the establishment.

C. Central Business Zone - A.

Off-street parking space shall be provided and permanently maintained for new construction by the owners and occupants of the following type property uses in the Central Business Zone - A either on the premises where the principal use in located or within 300 feet of the principal use on property owned by the owner of the principal use either wholly or jointly with other property owners in the Central Business Zone - A; in lieu thereof the owner of the property occupied by the principal use may contribute one thousand dollars ($1,000.00) per space required by any new construction to the City's off-street parking program, which funds shall be used to defray the cost of public off-street parking in the Central Business Zone - A.

In applying the following requirements: First floor area in the property use indicated, not to include storage area, shall meet one hundred percent (100%) of the requirement indicated; second floor and basement area in the property use indicated, not to include storage area, shall meet eighty percent (80%) of the requirement indicated; all other floor area, above the second floor or below the basement in any use shall be exempt from the parking requirements indicated:

1. Residence and apartments. One space for each dwelling unit.

2. Rooming houses, boardinghouses, and nurses' homes. One space for each four rooms to be rented or occupied.

3. Motels and tourists' homes. One space for each room or unit to be rented.

4. Hotels. One space for each four rooms, plus additional space as required for related uses within the hotel.

5. Medical clinics and offices. Four spaces for each doctor practicing at the clinic, plus one space for each employee.

6. Auditoriums, theaters, stadiums and similar uses, involving the assembling of persons at scheduled times. One space for each four seats in such place of assembly.

7. Bus terminals. One space for each employee and one space for each bus loading ramp and track.

8. Other office, business, service, and commercial uses. One space for each three hundred square feet of gross floor area.

Section 21. Off-Street Loading and Unloading Requirements.

At the time of the erection or expansion of any main building or part thereof which is used or is to be used for any use required by this section to provide off-street loading space, such space shall be provided as set forth herein:

A. Retail operations and all first-floor non-residential uses, with a gross floor area of less than twenty thousand square feet (20,000), and all wholesale and light industrial operations with a gross floor area of less than ten thousand (10,000) square feet:

1. A loading space determined by the building inspector to be sufficient to allow normal loading and unloading operations of a kind and magnitude appropriate to the use, without hindering the movement of pedestrians and vehicles over the public right-of-way.

B. Retail operations, including restaurant and dining facilities, within hotels and office buildings, with a gross floor area of twenty thousand square feet or more:

1. One loading berth with minimum dimensions of twelve feet by twenty-five feet and fourteen feet overhead clearance for every twenty thousand square feet of floor area and any fraction thereof in excess of ten thousand square feet.

C. Office buildings and hotels with a gross floor area of 50,000 square feet or more:

1. One loading berth with minimum dimensions of twelve feet by twenty-five feet and fourteen feet overhead clearance for every fifty thousand square feet floor area and any fraction thereof in excess of twenty-five thousand square feet.

D. Industrial and wholesale operations with a gross floor area of ten thousand square feet or over shall provide berths no less than twelve feet by fifty-five feet and fourteen feet overhead clearance in quantities determined by the building inspector to be sufficient to allow normal loading and unloading operations of magnitude appropriate to the use, without hindering the movements of pedestrians and vehicles over the public right-of-way.